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Volunteerism Among Military Families

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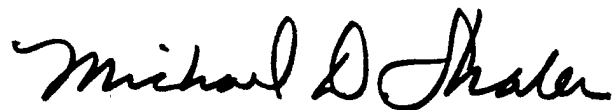
Foreword

This report explores data provided by a recent, extensive Department of Defense (DoD) survey of military personnel and their families. The focus of this report is on the various aspects of volunteerism amongst service members and their spouses, and compares the current survey results with those of a 1985 DoD survey and comparable data from civilian volunteers in their communities.

Volunteerism has a long and proud history within the military services, and a great body of anecdotal experiences have been recorded over the years. This report by Dr. Fontaine and her associates adds to that wealth of information by providing robust data and in-depth analyses to the discussion. The respondents to the DoD survey have provided a number of suggested improvements for increasing both the total numbers of people who would be willing to volunteer and increasing the commitment and satisfaction of those who do volunteer. Most of these suggestions are straightforward and low cost, and will be helpful to those responsible for managing volunteer programs throughout the services.

The conclusions drawn from this study point out that there is room to improve volunteer activity in the military services, and recent experience with a number of pilot programs demonstrates that there are innovative approaches which have a substantial payoff. Congress has been supportive of these new approaches by enacting legislation which assists in the recruitment of new volunteers and in improving the satisfaction and retention of those who have volunteered.

This report will assist in providing information to a wider audience and will help build upon the rich history of volunteerism in our military. For decades, both service member and family member volunteers in all our military services have provided willingly of their time and effort to add value to the community in which they find themselves. This selfless service has made a significant contribution to an improved quality of life.



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Executive Summary

Spouses of military personnel have traditionally provided volunteer services to the military community (Martindale, 1987). Volunteer activity can provide military spouses with satisfying experiences and often enhances a spouse's employment skills. In addition, in geographic areas where employment is not readily available, volunteer positions can offer a valuable alternative to paid employment. Volunteerism enhances both military and civilian community life. It provides for personal growth on the part of the volunteer and for enrichment for the greater community.

This study provides an analysis of volunteerism among military spouses and service members. It also suggests ways to promote volunteerism among these populations. Based on the results from the 1992 *Department of Defense Survey of Officers and Enlisted Personnel and their Spouses*, the study reviewed (1) the extent of volunteer activity among spouses and service members both on and off installation, (2) factors that promote volunteerism, and (3) factors that serve as obstacles to volunteerism.

For most respondents, the survey revealed that time constraints were a common reason for not volunteering. Other important factors that served as obstacles to volunteerism were the cost and lack of child care. Individuals who volunteered provided important information regarding organizational factors that might serve to increase volunteerism. These factors included better management of volunteers, volunteer positions that offered useful training for the future, and more recognition for voluntary efforts.

Findings indicate that spouses view time as a considerable obstacle to volunteerism. They also reveal that volunteer activities which enhance skills and employment opportunities for both spouses and service members would encourage volunteerism. Both service members and their spouses reported that they would respond to incentives to increase their interest in volunteerism.

We conclude that efforts can be made to overcome volunteer activity barriers. As the pilot programs have demonstrated, these efforts can be successful. This conclusion is true not only for the population in this study but for the population at large.

While this study examines volunteerism within a particular population—military families—many of the findings are generalizable to the population at large. As such, this study furthers our understanding of factors that foster volunteerism both within the military and nonprofit organizations in the civilian community.

Volunteerism Among Military Families

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Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine patterns of volunteerism among Armed Forces service members (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps) and their spouses both on and off military installations in the continental United States (CONUS) and outside the continental United States (OCONUS) populations.

The research was based on data obtained from the *1992 Department of Defense Survey of Officers and Enlisted Personnel and their Spouses*. This study focuses on those survey questions related to volunteerism. The variables examined encompass the specific factors that, if available, would promote volunteerism. Reasons given for non-volunteer activity are included in this report. The findings also revealed that for some of the survey respondents nothing would increase an interest in volunteerism.

Variables that could serve to promote volunteerism include:

- Parking privileges
- Volunteering with a friend
- More volunteer assignments of interest
- Reimbursement of expenses associated with volunteering
- Availability of child care
- Recognition for assignments
- Volunteer opportunities that would provide useful training for the future
- Better leadership of volunteers
- Improving the organization of volunteers
- Other unspecified reasons.

Reasons for not volunteering include:

- Problems obtaining child care
- Spouse too busy
- Cost of child care
- Problems with transportation.

Methodology

Data was collected from the 1992 *Department of Defense Survey of Officers and Enlisted Personnel and their Spouses* where questionnaires were mailed to 64,643 spouses. A total of 23,847 responded to the survey questions regarding spouses' involvement in volunteerism. The unadjusted response rate was 37%. The questions encompassed volunteer activities on installation (i.e., military unit support activities and installation/support activities) and off installation (i.e., local community support activities).

A comparative analysis was also conducted using the service member data of officer and enlisted personnel. A total of 96,830 questionnaires were delivered to service members with 59,930 individuals responding. The unadjusted response rate was 62%. As in the spouse questionnaire, the questions encompassed volunteer activities that were both on and off installation.

Frequencies and percentages were calculated for the responses to individual questions regarding the reasons spouses did not volunteer and the factors that would increase spouse and member interest in volunteering. Twenty-two variables were reviewed in this analysis.

Background

The 1992 Department of Defense (DoD) survey analyzed in this report was preceded by a 1985 survey which also included an examination of volunteerism. A report issued from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Family Support, Education, & Safety) by Melanie Martindale (1987), Defense Manpower Data Center, is based on the 1985 *DoD Survey of Military Spouses* and administrative information. The Martindale report provides an excellent description of volunteer behavior and volunteer frequency by spouses of active duty officers and enlisted personnel (military wives, military husbands, civilian wives, and civilian husbands) and serves as historical and comparative background. Data on volunteers were examined in conjunction with socio-demographic and other variables in order to develop a profile of characteristics and factors pertaining to volunteerism.

The 1985 study showed:

- Spouses of officers volunteer more frequently in relation to their population than do enlisted spouses.
- A portion of these officer-spouses spend only a small amount of time volunteering.

- The civilian wives of officers supply the majority of volunteer time (50.5%).
- There is no difference in volunteering behavior or volunteering frequency by service.

Since the results of the analyses indicated there were no significant installation differences, overall frequencies were used in this report.

The characteristics and attitudes of volunteers played a significant role in volunteer behavior. Specific characteristics and attitudes explored were: life course stage, sponsor pay grade, education, race/ethnicity, labor force status, occupations, location, time at current location, ability to find work befitting their skills at current location, and the attitudes of volunteers.

Life Course Stage

Individuals least likely to be involved in volunteer activities are young adults without children in the household or young adults with preschoolers. Individuals with children aged 6-17 are most likely to be involved in volunteering. As children in the household reach young adulthood, the parents' volunteer activities decrease.

Sponsor Pay Grade

Within the spouses of enlisted personnel, the percentage of volunteer activity increased as the pay grade increased. Similarly, within the officers' spouses main group (civilian wives), as the pay grade increased so did the level of volunteer activity. In other groups of officers' spouses, no relationship was found between pay grade and volunteer activity.

Education

There was no relationship between volunteer behavior and categories of education.

Race/Ethnicity

Among racial/ethnic minority groups, it was found that there were high levels of volunteering among Native Americans, lower levels of volunteering among Asians and Blacks, and mid-range levels of volunteering among Hispanics.

Labor Force Status

The labor force status variable (for spouses of service members only) showed that in all four civilian spouse groups, both full- and part-time workers had a higher level of volunteer activity than those who were unemployed. However, in three out of four groups, those unemployed were more likely to volunteer than those working full time. Also, in three out of four groups, part-time workers were more likely to volunteer than full-time workers.

Occupation

The most likely volunteers within the civilian spouses of enlisted personnel group were those employed in the technical/professional/managerial fields.

The most likely volunteers within the civilian spouses of officers group were those employed in the craft/operative fields.

Employment Opportunities at Current Location

Both the civilian spouses of enlisted personnel and the civilian wives of officers were more likely to volunteer if they could not find employment opportunities at their current location.

Attitude

Data demonstrated that, in many cases, volunteer activity is not related to satisfaction with specific aspects of military life but rather is associated with overall satisfaction; and, that familial and personal factors as well as external expectations are more likely to influence volunteer activities than satisfaction or dissatisfaction with specific aspects of military life. Furthermore, the frequency of volunteer activity among the spouses of enlisted personnel is

higher for spouses who are satisfied or very satisfied with the military way of life compared to those who are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Overall, the data showed that while dissatisfaction with the military may have influenced the volunteer frequency of some number of spouses, volunteering as a whole was not effected by satisfaction.

Administrative Data

Some rough similarities appeared in comparisons of data collected from this study to the Gallup Organization's study "Americans Volunteer, 1981" (Martindale, 1987). It was found that while health, religious, and social/recreation organizations are important in civilian and military communities, adult and youth recreation groups form a more important basis of military volunteer efforts than that of civilians. Also, it was found that the only type of organization considered important in the civilian sector that did not show importance in the military data were school- and education-related organizations.

Conclusion from the Martindale Study

Martindale's study (1987) showed that many factors effect volunteerism and its frequency. Noteworthy is that the behaviors and attitudes of individuals do not necessarily or normally coincide. Individuals volunteer for a variety of reasons which include: self-interest, altruism, and social pressure.

There are other variables in addition to the life course and socioeconomic variables that have an effect on volunteering and its frequency. Volunteer organizations on U.S. military installations do not differ characteristically from their civilian counterparts. One exception is education-related organizations which are more common in the civilian sector. Another exception is that athletic and recreational groups seem to be more common on military installations. Finally, it appears that the military community presents unique opportunities for the formation of volunteer organizations and the gaining of skills not mirrored in the civilian world.

Patterns of Volunteerism

Overview

The role of spouses and volunteerism in the military is unique. According to Katherine Reardon:

“Spouses are frequently called upon by the military command to provide formal support through volunteerism when paid formal support services are absent or inadequate to serve community need” (Reardon, 1996).

The 1992 DoD survey reported responses from 23,847 military spouses. Of this number 16,061 (67%) did not engage in any type of volunteer activity; 7,786 (33%) did perform volunteer work/activity.

Comparatively in 1995, the Independent Sector (1996) reported that 48.8% of the adult U.S. population was involved in some sort of volunteer activity. Reasons for differences in volunteerism between the general population and military spouses can be due, in part, to the three-year time difference between these two surveys. However, given that less than 35% of the military spouses were involved in volunteerism, it is worthwhile to explore the reasons why spouses did not volunteer. Of equal importance will be to assess the factors that might increase a spouse's interest and participation in volunteer activities.

Demographic Analysis of Spouse Volunteer Activities

The demographic makeup of military spouses' involvement in volunteer activities can be observed from several viewpoints: on-installation volunteerism, off-installation volunteerism, volunteer activities both on and off installation, and overall characteristics of volunteers and non-volunteers (Appendix A, Table 1A).

Of the 23,847 military spouse responses, 67% reported no participation in any volunteer work and 33% reported varying degrees of volunteerism.

Overall Volunteerism

Of the total 7,786 spouses who performed volunteer work, 86% were female, 14% were male, 52% were age 36 or older, and 27% were between 31 and 35 years old.

Twenty-seven percent of survey respondents reported having some college experience short of a two-year degree. This was followed by 23% who reported having earned a four-year college degree. Overall, 55% of the volunteers reported an educational attainment of a two-year college degree or higher.

Volunteers were predominantly White (86%) followed by African American and Hispanic respondents, who represented 7% and 6% of the sample, respectively.

The majority of respondents (81%) reported this as their first marriage.

On-Installation Volunteerism

Volunteer work on installations was performed by 2,320 spouses (86% female and 14% male). Fifty-seven percent were below the age of 35. Twenty-seven percent of participants were between 31 and 35 years old.

Twenty-nine percent of survey respondents reported having some college experience short of a two-year degree. This was followed by 24% who reported having earned a four-year college degree. Overall, 53% of the respondents reported an educational attainment of a two-year college degree or higher.

Eighty-four percent of the on-installation volunteers identified themselves as White, followed by African Americans and Hispanics, each representing 7%.

The majority of respondents (81%) reported this as their first marriage.

Off-Installation Volunteerism

Volunteer work off installation was performed by 4,152 spouses (86% female and 14% male). Sixty-nine percent of these volunteers were between 26 and 40 years old. Twenty-seven percent of participants were between the ages of 36 and 40.

Twenty-six percent of the survey respondents reported having some college experience. This was followed by 22% who reported having earned a four-year college degree. Overall, 55% of the off-installation volunteers reported an educational attainment of a two-year college degree or higher.

Off-installation volunteers were predominantly White (86%) followed by African American and Hispanic respondents, who represented 7% and 6% of the sample, respectively.

The majority of respondents (80%) reported this as their first marriage.

Volunteerism Both On and Off Installation

Volunteer work was performed both on and off installations by 1,314 spouses (84% female and 16% male). Fifty-two percent of these volunteers were age 36 or older. Twenty-six percent were between 36 and 40 years old.

Twenty-seven percent of the survey respondents reported having earned a four-year college degree. This was followed by 23% who reported having some college experience short of a two-year degree. Overall, 62% of off-installation volunteers reported an educational attainment of a two-year college degree or higher.

This group of volunteers were predominantly White (89%) followed by African American and Hispanic respondents, representing 5% and 4% of the sample, respectively.

The majority of respondents (83%) reported this as their first marriage.

Non-Volunteers

Of the 16,061 spouses who did not perform any volunteer work 79% were female, 21% were male, 63% were age 35 or younger and 24% were between 26 and 30 years old.

Twenty-five percent of survey respondents reported having some college experience short of a two-year degree. This was followed by 23% who reported having earned a high school diploma. Overall, 55% of the non-volunteers reported an educational attainment below the two-year college degree level.

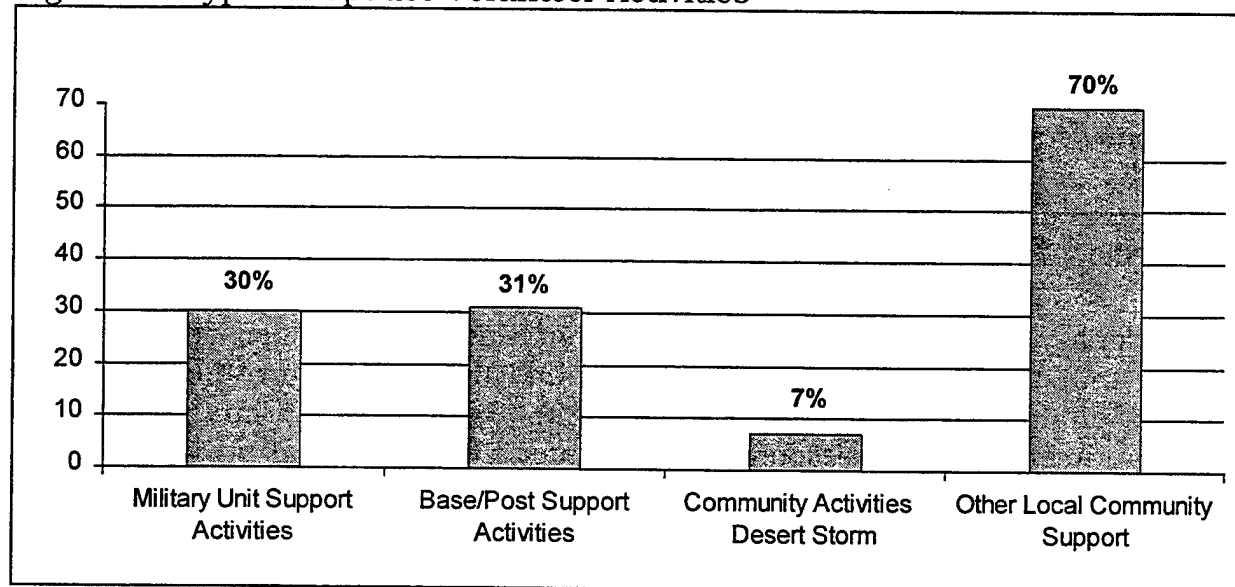
Overall, non-volunteers were predominantly White (79%); followed by African American and Hispanic respondents, representing 10% and 7% of the sample, respectively.

The majority of respondents (77%) reported this as their first marriage.

Spouse Volunteer Activities

A variety of spouse volunteer activities were investigated (Figure 1 and Appendix A, Table 2A). Overall, the majority of spouses (70%) volunteered primarily in their local communities. This broad category ranged from volunteer efforts in well-established organizations to informal volunteering such as organizing a bake sale for a school fund-raising event. Thirty percent of spouses volunteered for installation/support activities and 30% volunteered for military unit support activities. While both activities can be considered a volunteer activity within the military community, they are different. Military unit support activities focus on a small unit stationed at an installation while installation/support activities are, as the name suggests, installation-wide.

Figure 1 Types of Spouse Volunteer Activities



Noteworthy is that only recently, under the *National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 1995*, expanded authority was given for the increased use of volunteers in the following areas:

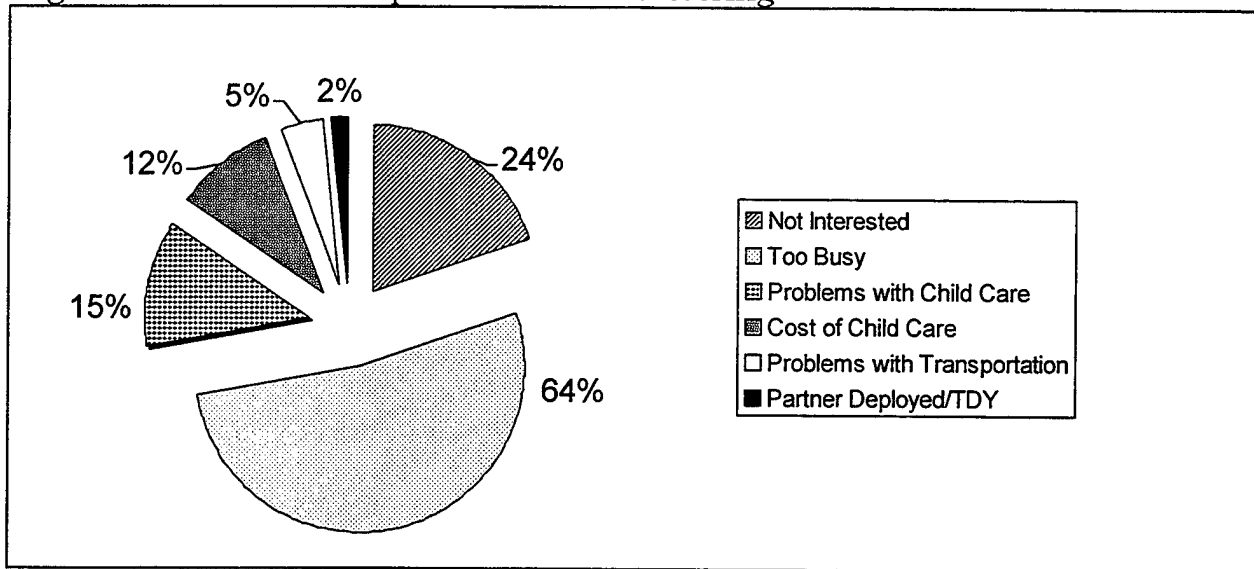
- Medical services, dental services, nursing services, and other health-related services
- Museum or natural resources program
- Family support programs
- Child development and youth services programs
- Religious programs
- Housing referral programs
- Spouse employment assistance programs
- Recreation programs.

Proceeding this Act were several acts which incrementally increased volunteerism within the military community. The first was in 1983 (P.L. 98-94) which provided volunteers in family support programs and military museums legal protection from lawsuits related to their volunteer activity. Family support and military museums were, until 1995, the customary positions of volunteers on military installations. The Act considered these volunteers Federal employees for purposes of tort claims and workers' compensation. In 1987, the *National Defense Act of 1987* authorized reimbursement for personal expenses from non-appropriated funds. The *National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 1992* authorized reimbursement of personal expenses from appropriated as well as non-appropriated funds. A list of expanded volunteer positions occurring under the pilot program is provided in Appendix B.

Reasons for Not Volunteering

The primary reason given for not participating in volunteer activities was simply that the spouses did not feel they had the time (Figure 2). Sixty-four percent of survey respondents listed being too busy as the primary reason for not volunteering. This response is consistent with national surveys on why individuals do not volunteer. In a survey conducted for the Independent Sector by Hodgkinson and Weitzman (1996), it was reported that 59.9% of Americans did not volunteer because personal schedules were too full.

Figure 2 Reasons for Spouses Not Volunteering



Note: The total percentages exceed 100% because some spouses indicated more than one reason.

Traditionally, women have been predominant in the volunteer sector. As women entered the work force and two-income families became the norm, less women had time to become involved in volunteer activity (Firstenberg, 1996). In a family with two working spouses much of the free time of both spouses may be spent with their children (Gerson, 1997).

Twenty-four percent of survey respondents reported no interest in volunteer activities. This mirrors the national figure in which 12% of the population cited "lack of interest" as the primary reason for not volunteering (Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1996). This is not an atypical response. There are, however, suggestions on how to overcome the lack of interest in volunteering and the problem of time commitments. Paul Shervis, Social Services Research Institute at Boston College found the following efforts to be most effective in promoting volunteerism:

- Explaining why help is needed
- Explaining the value of volunteer efforts
- Limiting the volunteer's involvement (Shervis, interview).

Specific Barriers to Volunteerism

Research concerning volunteerism indicates that while an individual's reasons for volunteering tend to be value-laden, personal reasons for not volunteering are more particularistic (Clary, Snyder, Copeland & French, 1994). It is

important to examine the specific barriers to volunteer activity among military spouses.

Problems with securing child care and the cost of child care itself are indicative of some of the problems spouses face when considering volunteer activities (Figure 2). Among those spouses who did not volunteer, 15% cited problems with child care and 12% cited child care costs as reasons why they did not participate in volunteer activities.

Difficulties in obtaining transportation to a site can also be a significant barrier to volunteering. A small percentage of non-volunteers (5%) listed problems with transportation as a specific reason for not volunteering. However, since many volunteer opportunities exist on installation, transportation may not be an insurmountable barrier in volunteerism for military spouses who live on the installation.

Factors that Would Increase Spouse Interest

Integral to this study is the analysis of factors that would increase interest in volunteerism among spouses who have not yet volunteered and those who are presently involved with volunteer activities (Table 1 and Appendix A, Table 2A). Volunteer activities can provide ways for spouses to learn about various employment opportunities, acquire new skills, and even develop contacts for future jobs (Clary, Snyder & Ridge, 1992). Evidently, respondents recognize that volunteerism can provide useful training for their future careers. Twenty-seven percent of spouses who did not volunteer and 34% of those who did noted that volunteer opportunities would provide useful training for the future and would increase their interest in volunteer activities.

Table 1
Factors that Would Increase Spouse Volunteerism

	<u>Spouse Volunteers</u>	<u>Spouse Non-Volunteers</u>
Parking Privileges	7%	3%
Volunteering with a Friend	20%	17%
Assignments of Interest	26%	22%
Reimbursement of Expenses	21%	15%
Child Care	25%	24%
Recognition	14%	8%
Useful Training	34%	27%
Better Leadership	15%	6%
Better Organization	21%	9%
Nothing	18%	28%

Note: See also Appendix C, page C-1.

The second most important factor in increasing volunteerism (22% non-volunteers and 26% volunteers) was the need to have more assignments of interest. All too often volunteers are not appreciated and are given uninteresting tasks. Enthusiasm for in volunteer activities would increase if volunteers were provided with more skill-oriented tasks and were involved in the operational decisions of a program.

The overall management of volunteers is related to the types of assignments. Three questions on the survey addressed improvements in management including better leadership, better organization of volunteers, and recognition for assignments as factors that would tend to increase volunteerism. Both non-volunteers (6%) and volunteers (15%) felt that better leadership would increase interest. Non-volunteers (9%) and volunteers (21%) believed that better organization of volunteers would increase interest. Both groups (8% non-volunteers and 14% volunteers) expressed that recognition for assignments would increase their interest. A disturbing factor is that volunteers believed they are viewed as "second-class citizens" relative to the paid staff (Brudney, 1993). This response from volunteers is particularly relevant given that they are in a position to assess these factors personally.

Following the Volunteer Summit, a *Newsweek* article (Gerson, 1997) noted the importance of capable volunteer management. Gerson stated that most volunteers are not employed effectively and their management is often poor. It was suggested that, consequently, volunteers will be unable to provide the solutions to the social problems that policy-makers have optimistically sought from the volunteer sector. Lack of effective volunteer management is inherently a part of the organizational problem. Brudney (1993) noted that organizations do not provide support for volunteer managers or the programs for which they have responsibility. It has also been noted that volunteer managers felt unappreciated and their accomplishments trivialized (Scheier, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c). In a contrary example, Drucker (1990) reported how one parish increased its volunteerism by transforming the volunteers from the status of helpers to that of colleagues. Improved leadership and organization of volunteers could be strengthened by an atmosphere that recognizes the contributions of volunteers to nonprofit organizations and the importance of the role of volunteer administration.

Volunteer administrators—or in smaller organizations, executive staff members—should recognize the work of volunteers. This recognition would serve as a form of non-monetary reward. One reason that individuals volunteer is to increase their self-esteem (Clary, Snyder & Ridge, 1992). Recognition of efforts and accomplishments would instill a sense of satisfaction and self-esteem among volunteers.

The social aspect of volunteering is demonstrated in that many volunteers would be likely to volunteer with a friend (17% non-volunteers and 20% volunteers). Since one means of volunteer recruitment is through word-of-mouth, volunteers can also serve as a valuable source in recruiting others.

Other Factors

Given that volunteer work is unpaid, it may be an added burden for potential volunteer organizations to actually pay for the costs of volunteering such as mileage costs, parking privileges, and child care. Volunteer programs that involve someone using their own automobile for transportation could offer reimbursement for mileage. Another example would be to validate parking or provide parking spaces for volunteers. These expenses are generally minimal and would be offset by the contributions of volunteers. In the survey, child care availability was ranked as an important factor in increasing volunteer activity (27% volunteers and 24% non-volunteers). Also, 21% of volunteers and 15% of non-volunteers felt that reimbursement of expenses would increase interest in volunteer activity. A small percentage (7% volunteers and 3% non-volunteers) considered that parking privileges would positively effect their interest in volunteer activities.

Department of Defense Voluntary Services Pilot Program

The *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995, Section 1061 of Public Law 13-337, "Increased Authority to Accept Voluntary Services,"* directed the Department of Defense to conduct pilot programs that would, in essence, promote volunteerism on military installations. The six-month volunteer pilot program was conducted at 60 sites, which included active duty installations of three Military Departments, the National Guard in ten states, and the Reserves. The pilot program initiated needed changes in volunteer management and incentives for volunteerism. For example, each volunteer position required a clear description of duties, an orientation and training program, documentation and recognition of work performed, and reimbursement for incidental expenses—reimbursement amounted to an average of fifty-one cents per volunteer hour (Department of Defense, 1996).

Each of the Military Departments and the National Guard submitted their reports on the results of the pilot program. The results clearly indicated that programs of this nature can increase volunteerism. Some of these results included:

- An increase in the number of programs using volunteers
- An expansion in the services offered by program/installation organizations
- The development of special projects (e.g., Special Olympics)
- An increase in the skills and self-esteem of volunteers
- Enhancement of job skill and employment potential (particularly for spouses).

Increased use of volunteers proved to be an asset to the participating organizations. In addition to being able to expand service, some programs were able to reduce their overtime costs and reported that volunteers positively effected their "bottom-line" (Department of Defense, 1996).

Military Officers and Enlisted Personnel

The 1992 *Department of Defense Survey of Officers and Enlisted Personnel and their Spouses* also contained questions related to volunteerism for military officers and enlisted Armed Forces personnel (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps). For the purpose of comparison, this study summarized the responses of service members to questions regarding factors that would increase volunteer activities.

There were a total of 54,562 military officers and enlisted personnel who responded to the volunteerism section of the 1992 survey. Of this total, 39% reported being involved in volunteer activity while 61% reported they did not volunteer. This represents a slightly higher percentage of volunteerism compared to the military spouses.

Similar to the spouse survey, several questions were asked regarding variables that would increase the respondent's interest in volunteerism. The responses were not always similar to the responses of military spouses. One point of interest is that only 17% of service members (compared to 27% of spouses) cited the desire for volunteer assignments to provide useful training for the future. Similar to military spouses, a commonly cited response was that 26% of non-volunteers and 31% of volunteers felt that there should be more assignments of interest. Thirteen percent of non-volunteers and 16% of volunteers cited they would be more willing to participate if they could volunteer with a friend. Predictably among the service members, child care was not a considerable barrier (9% non-volunteers and 14% volunteers) nor were parking privileges (3% non-volunteers and 5% volunteers).

Responses to questions regarding volunteer management issues among service members were similar to the responses of military spouses. Service members had a slightly greater concern for recognition for assignments (11% non-volunteers and 21% volunteers) and a lesser concern for leadership (4% non-volunteers and 10% volunteers).

Socioeconomic variables such as education, race/ethnicity, age, and rank differ among volunteers and non-volunteers (Martindale, 1987). These can be explored in more detail by looking at the types of volunteer activities in which people participate.

Demographic Analysis of Officer and Enlisted Volunteer Activities

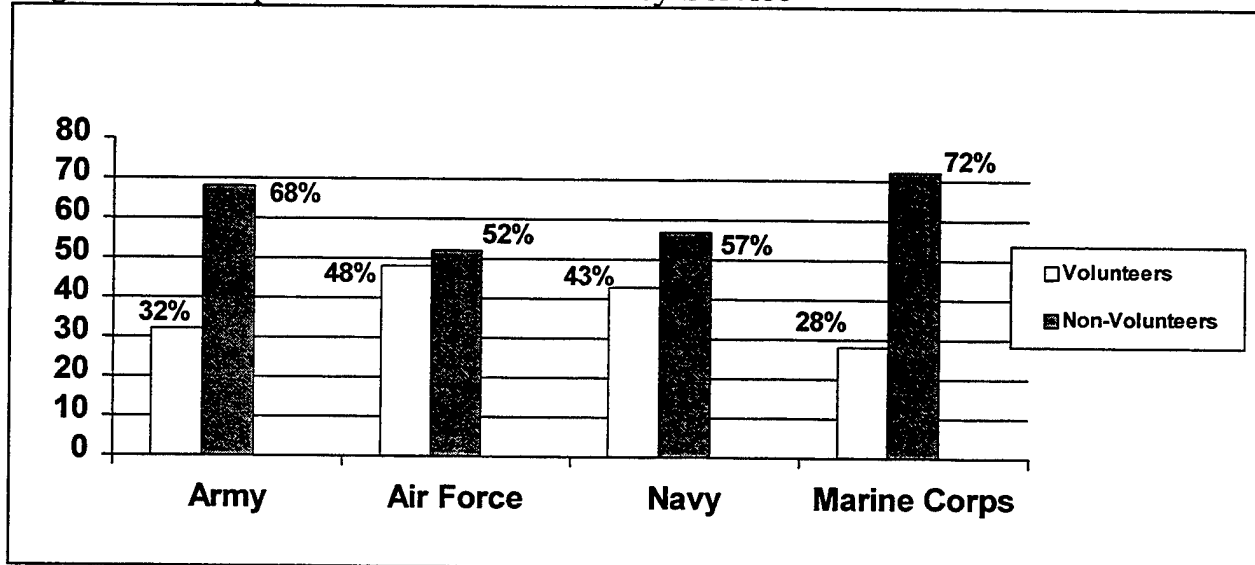
The demographic makeup of service member involvement in volunteer activities can be observed from several viewpoints: on-installation volunteerism, off-installation volunteerism, volunteer activities both on and off installation, and overall characteristics of volunteers and non-volunteers (Appendix A, Table 3A).

Service member responses totaled 54,562; of these, 61% reported not taking part in any volunteer work and 39% reported varying degrees of volunteerism.

Overall Volunteerism

A total of 21,401 service members (40% female, 60% male) performed volunteer work of some type. Individual service breakdowns (Figure 3) show highest rates of volunteerism were in the Air Force (48%) and the Navy (43%).

Figure 3 Comparison of Volunteerism by Service



Slightly more volunteers were enlisted personnel (51%). Sixty-three percent of these volunteers were age 35 or younger. Twenty-four percent were between 31 and 35 years old.

Twenty-eight percent of the service member respondents reported having some college experience short of a two-year degree. This was followed by 18% who reported having earned a four-year college degree and another 18% who

reported having a master's degree. Overall, 59% of the volunteers reported an educational attainment of a two-year college degree or higher.

Service member volunteers were predominantly White (79%), followed by African American and Hispanic respondents, representing 12% and 7% of the sample respectively.

The majority of respondents (69%) reported their marital status as married. Included in these were 54% who reported this as their first marriage.

On-Installation Volunteerism

There were 6,364 service members who performed volunteer work on an installation (49% female and 51% male). Most were in the Air Force (42%) or the Navy (25%). Fifty-six percent of the on-installation volunteers were enlisted personnel. Twenty-four percent of participants were between 26 and 30 years old. Seventy-one percent of the on-installation volunteers were below the age of 35.

Overall, 55% of the respondents reported an educational attainment of a two-year college degree or higher. Thirty percent of these respondents reported having some college experience. This was followed by 19% who reported having earned a four-year college degree.

On-installation service member volunteers were predominantly White (76%), followed by African American and Hispanic respondents, 14% and 8%, respectively.

The majority of these respondents (63%) reported their marital status as married. Included in these were 50% who reported this as their first marriage.

Off-Installation Volunteerism

A total of 11,489 individuals performed volunteer work off installation, of these 35% were female and 65% were male. Most were either Air Force (31%) or Navy (35%) service members. The majority of off-installation volunteers (53%) were officers. Sixty-seven percent of off-installation volunteers were between 26 and 40 years old and 24% were between 31 and 35 years old.

Overall, 60% of the off-installation volunteers reported an educational attainment of a two-year college degree or higher. Twenty-five percent reported

having college experience short of a two-year degree. This was followed by 20% who reported having earned a master's degree.

Off-installation service member volunteers were predominantly White (81%); African American and Hispanic respondents followed, representing 11% and 7% of the sample, respectively.

The majority of service members (72%) reported their marital status as married. Included in these were 56% who reported this as their first marriage.

Volunteerism Both On and Off Installation

Of the 3,549 service members who performed volunteer work on and off installation, 42% were female and 58% were male. Most of these were in the Air Force (45%) or the Navy (30%); 55% were enlisted personnel. Sixty-five percent of the service members were age 35 or younger and 24% were between 31 and 35 years old.

Thirty percent of survey respondents reported having some college experience short of a two-year degree. This was followed by 17% who reported having earned a four-year degree. Overall, 56% of the volunteers reported an educational attainment of a two-year college degree or higher.

This group of volunteers were predominantly White (77%); African American and Hispanic respondents followed, representing 14% and 6% of the sample respectively.

The majority (66%) reported their marital status as married. Included in these were 51% who reported this as their first marriage.

Non-Volunteers

Service members who did not perform any volunteer work totaled 33,160 (41% female and 59% male). Most of these were in the Navy (27%) or the Army (26%); 53% were enlisted personnel. Seventy-one percent of the non-volunteers were age 35 or younger; 24% were between 26 and 30 years old.

Overall, 53% of the non-volunteers reported having earned a two-year degree or higher. Twenty-six percent reported having some college experience short of a two-year degree. This was followed by 21% who reported having earned a four-year degree.

The majority of non-volunteers (77%) were White; African American and Hispanic respondents followed, representing 15% and 6% of the sample respectively.

The majority (62%) reported their marital status as married. Included in these, were 48% who reported this as their first marriage.

Factors that Would Increase Service Member Interest

As with military spouses, integral to this study was the analysis of factors that would increase interest in volunteerism among service members who have not yet volunteered and among those presently participating in volunteer activities (Table 2 and Appendix A, Table 4A). Volunteer activities can provide additional opportunities for members to learn about various employment opportunities, acquire new skills, and develop contacts for future jobs. Evidently, respondents recognize that volunteerism can provide useful training for their future careers. In summary, 17% of members who did not volunteer and 21% of those who did noted that volunteer opportunities would provide useful training for the future and would increase their interest in volunteerism.

Table 2
Factors that Would Increase Service Member Volunteerism

	<u>Member Volunteers</u>	<u>Member Non-Volunteers</u>
Parking Privileges	5%	3%
Volunteering with a Friend	16%	13%
Assignments of Interest	31%	26%
Reimbursement of Expenses	12%	8%
Child Care	14%	9%
Recognition	21%	11%
Useful Training	21%	17%
Better Leadership	10%	4%
Better Organization	19%	8%
Nothing	20%	32%

Note: See also Appendix C, page C-2.

Availability of more assignments of interest was an important factor for increasing volunteerism as reported by 26% of the non-volunteers and 31% of volunteers. Service members suggested two other ways to increase interest in volunteer activities: provide activities with more skill-oriented tasks and offer involvement in the program's operations decisions.

The overall management of volunteers is related to the types of volunteer assignments. As with the spouse questionnaire, three questions on the survey addressed improvements in volunteer management as factors that would tend to increase volunteerism: better leadership, better organization of volunteers, and recognition for assignments. Both non-volunteers (4%) and volunteers (10%) felt that better leadership would increase interest. Non-volunteers (8%) and volunteers (19%) believed that better organization of volunteers would increase interest. Both groups (11% non-volunteers and 21% volunteers) expressed that receiving recognition for assignments would increase their interest.

Many service members (13% non-volunteers and 16% volunteers) expressed they would be interested in volunteering with a friend, which reflects the social aspect of volunteering.

Other Factors

In the 1992 DoD Survey, volunteers (14%) and non-volunteers (9%) ranked child care availability as an important factor in increasing volunteer activity. Also, both volunteers and non-volunteers (12% and 8%, respectively) felt that reimbursement of expenses would increase interest in volunteer activity. A very small percentage (5% volunteers and 3% non-volunteers) reported that parking privileges would positively effect their interest in volunteerism.

Conclusions

The analysis of responses to *The 1992 Department of Defense Survey of Officers and Enlisted Personnel and their Spouses* among what was a traditional population for volunteerism illustrates what should be a growing concern for volunteerism in general. Spouses in this survey indicated that time is a considerable obstacle to volunteerism. One issue that must be considered is that of structuring volunteer opportunities to allow flexibility in the time commitment volunteers make.

This volunteerism study also reveals that volunteer activities, which enhance skills and future employment opportunities for both spouses and service members, would encourage volunteerism (Table 3). Comparatively, both service members and their spouses would respond to incentives to increase their interest in volunteerism. Management and leadership improvements would aid in structuring programs that would be meaningful and useful for individuals who are involved in volunteer projects as well as for those considering using their personal time for volunteer activities.

Table 3
Factors that Would Increase both Member and Spouse Volunteerism

	<u>Member Volunteers</u>	<u>Spouse Volunteers</u>
Parking Privileges	5%	7%
Volunteering with a Friend	16%	20%
Assignments of Interest	31%	26%
Reimbursement of Expenses	12%	21%
Child Care	14%	26%
Recognition	21%	14%
Useful Training	21%	34%
Better Leadership	10%	15%
Better Organization	19%	21%
Nothing	20%	18%

Note: See also Appendix C, page C-3.

The expansion of volunteers on military installations and the concomitant expansion of reimbursement for personal expenses for the programs have resulted in a growth of the ranks of volunteers on military installations. What is not surprising is that the voluntary services pilot program is doing very well overseas where there are fewer job opportunities (Jowers, 1995).

It can be concluded that efforts can be made to overcome volunteer activity barriers. As the pilot program has demonstrated, these efforts can be successful. This conclusion is true not only for the population in this study but for the population at large.

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Shervis, Paul, interview by author, Social Services Research Institute, Boston College, December 12, 1997.

Appendix A

Table 1 A
Demographic Distribution of Military Spouse Volunteers

	On-Installation Volunteerism		Off-Installation Volunteerism		Both On and Off-Installation Volunteerism		OVERALL	
	n	Percentage	n	Percentage	n	Percentage	n	Percentage
Gender								
-Male	312	14%	573	14%	212	16%	1097	14%
-Female	2002	86%	3569	86%	1101	84%	6672	86%
							12711	79%
Age								
-Less than 20 years	17	1%	25	1%	5	0%	47	1%
-20-25 Years	178	8%	199	5%	82	6%	459	6%
-26-30 Years	460	21%	644	16%	211	16%	1315	17%
-31-35 Years	632	27%	1071	26%	317	24%	2020	27%
-36-40 Years	500	22%	1103	27%	348	26%	1951	25%
-41-45 Years	331	14%	744	18%	224	17%	1299	17%
-46-50 Years	115	5%	228	5%	83	6%	426	5%
-Over 50 Years	70	3%	115	3%	39	3%	224	3%
							465	3%
Education								
-Less than 12 Years of School	26	1%	54	1%	4	0%	84	1%
-GED or High School Equivalency	52	2%	79	2%	13	1%	144	2%
-High School Diploma	339	15%	580	14%	140	11%	1059	14%
-Some College, But did not graduate	653	29%	1043	26%	304	23%	2000	27%
-2 Year College Degree	248	11%	454	11%	136	10%	838	11%
-4 Year College Degree	537	24%	911	22%	341	27%	1789	23%
-Some Graduate School	198	9%	395	10%	146	11%	739	9%
-Masters Degree	185	8%	473	11%	174	13%	832	11%
-Doctoral Degree	22	1%	55	1%	18	1%	95	1%
-Other	28	1%	49	1%	28	2%	105	1%
							181	1%
Race								
-American Indian	23	1%	22	1%	10	1%	55	1%
-Black/African American	158	7%	230	7%	56	5%	444	7%
-Asian	90	4%	127	3%	31	2%	248	3%
-White	1922	84%	3574	86%	1168	89%	6664	86%
-Other	89	4%	158	4%	39	3%	286	4%
							712	4%
Hispanic Race								
-Not Hispanic	2121	93%	3873	94%	1244	96%	7238	94%
-Mexican/Mexican American	58	3%	72	3%	19	1%	149	2%
-Puerto Rican	23	1%	47	1%	8	1%	78	1%
-Cuban	5	0%	4	0%	3	0%	12	0%
-Central or South American	22	1%	30	1%	4	0%	56	1%
-Other	35	2%	57	1%	15	1%	107	2%
							269	2%
Marital Status								
-Married for the First Time	1863	81%	3320	80%	1095	83%	6298	81%
-Remarried, was Divorced	399	17%	738	18%	208	16%	1345	17%
-Remarried, was Widowed	17	1%	38	1%	4	0%	59	1%
-Separated	10	0%	38	1%	5	0%	53	1%
-Widowed	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
-Divorced	0	0%	6	0%	1	0%	7	0%
							23	0%

* In some cases the total (n) for individual categories may not add to the overall total of 21,402. This is due to varying degrees of non-response in individual categories.

Table 2 A

Analysis of Volunteerism Activities - Military Spouses

[illegible]

χ^2 tests across the total (n) for individual categories may not add to the overall total of 7.788. This is due to varying degrees of non-response in individual categories.

Table 3 A
Demographic Distribution of Service Member Volunteers

	On-Installation		Off-Installation		Both On and Off-Installation		OVERALL			
	Volunteerism		Volunteerism		Volunteerism		Total		Non	
	n	Percentage	n	Percentage	n	Percentage	n	Percentage	n	Percentage
Gender										
-Male	3272	51%	7515	65%	2044	58%	12831	60%	19499	59%
-Female	3091	49%	3974	35%	1505	42%	8570	40%	13661	41%
Service										
-Army	1371	22%	2171	19%	510	14%	4052	19%	8774	26%
-Air Force	2697	42%	3511	31%	1613	45%	7821	37%	8402	25%
-Navy	1588	25%	4024	35%	1055	30%	6667	31%	8800	27%
-Marines	708	11%	1783	16%	371	10%	2862	13%	7184	22%
Rank										
-Officer	2827	44%	6126	53%	1580	45%	10533	49%	15527	47%
-Enlisted	3536	56%	5363	47%	1969	55%	10868	51%	17633	53%
Age										
-Less than 20 years	278	4%	196	2%	132	4%	606	3%	1508	5%
-20-25 Years	1248	20%	1283	11%	577	16%	3108	15%	7049	21%
-26-30 Years	1501	24%	2292	20%	760	21%	4553	21%	7989	24%
-31-35 Years	1439	23%	2782	24%	859	24%	5080	24%	6933	21%
-36-40 Years	1110	17%	2624	23%	692	19%	4426	21%	5340	16%
-41-45 Years	579	9%	1612	14%	373	11%	2564	12%	3020	9%
-46-50 Years	149	2%	504	4%	102	3%	755	4%	898	3%
-Over 50 Years	60	1%	196	2%	54	2%	310	1%	423	1%
Education										
-Less than 12 Years of School	3	0%	14	0%	4	0%	21	0%	46	0%
-GED or High School Equivalency	49	1%	111	1%	31	1%	191	1%	502	2%
-High School Diploma	865	14%	1273	11%	408	11%	2546	12%	6479	20%
-Some College, But did not graduate	1866	30%	2860	25%	1040	30%	5766	28%	8341	26%
-2 Year College Degree	570	9%	954	8%	352	10%	1876	9%	2213	7%
-4 Year College Degree	1220	19%	2078	18%	619	17%	3917	18%	6834	21%
-Some Graduate School	565	9%	1165	10%	354	10%	2084	10%	2615	8%
-Masters Degree	945	15%	2328	20%	579	16%	3852	18%	4409	13%
-Doctoral Degree	176	3%	478	4%	99	3%	753	4%	1226	4%
-Other	39	1%	141	2%	36	1%	216	1%	275	1%
Race										
-American Indian	59	1%	119	1%	23	1%	201	1%	299	1%
-Black/African American	891	14%	1287	11%	482	14%	2660	12%	4955	15%
-Asian	200	3%	254	2%	126	4%	580	3%	726	2%
-White	4779	76%	9272	81%	2686	77%	16737	79%	25213	77%
-Other	363	6%	474	4%	187	5%	1024	5%	1684	5%
Hispanic Race										
-Not Hispanic	5774	92%	10684	93%	3250	93%	19708	93%	30454	93%
-Mexican/Mexican American	158	3%	231	3%	87	2%	476	3%	866	3%
-Puerto Rican	103	2%	142	1%	50	1%	295	1%	490	1%
-Cuban	12	0%	16	0%	11	0%	39	0%	65	0%
-Central or South American	57	1%	63	1%	20	1%	140	1%	232	1%
-Other	116	2%	158	2%	63	2%	337	2%	462	1%
Marital Status										
-Married for the First Time	3200	50%	6480	56%	1816	51%	11496	54%	15897	48%
-Remarried	850	13%	1797	16%	526	15%	3173	15%	4541	14%
-Separated	137	2%	263	2%	84	2%	484	2%	920	3%
-Widowed	17	0%	33	0%	4	0%	54	0%	83	0%
-Divorced	576	9%	972	8%	312	9%	1860	9%	2845	9%
-Never Married	1573	25%	1914	17%	796	22%	4283	20%	8794	27%

* In some cases the total (n) for individual categories may not add to the overall total of 21,402. This is due to varying degrees of non-response in individual categories.

Analysis of Volunteerism Activities - Service Members

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Appendix B

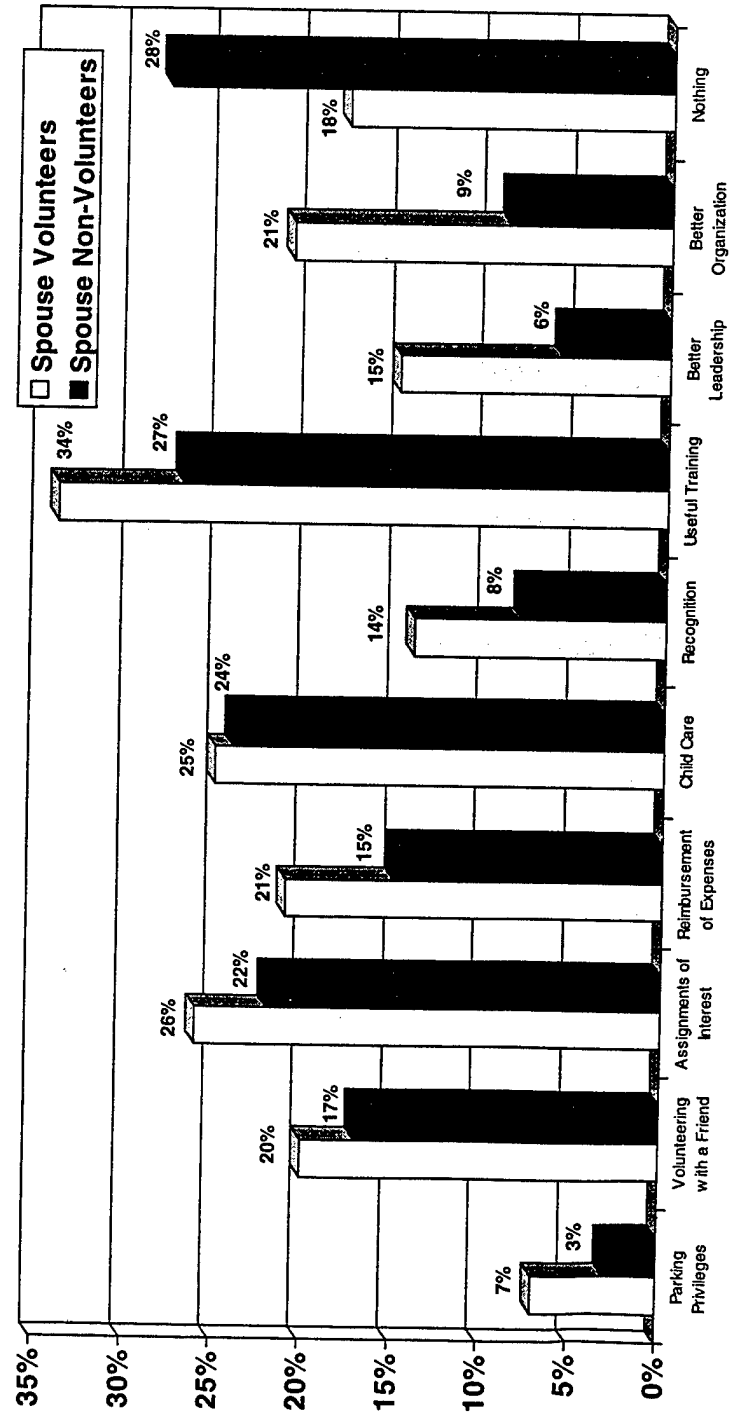
Pilot Program Volunteer Positions

Retiree Activities
Installation Pharmacy
Installation Schools
Hospital Information Desk and Outpatient Records
Installation Customer Service
Contracting Squadron
Arts and Crafts Center
Youth Center
Veterinary Services
Special Olympics
Library
Chapel
Child Development Center
Security Police
Civil Engineers
Financial Management
Legal Office
Post Office
Transportation Squadron
Public Affairs
Bowling Center
Outdoor Recreation
Adopt a School Mentor Program
Visitor Center
Housing
Radio/TV Station
Recycling Centers
Graphics
Public Works
Audio Visual
Human Resources Development Center
Naval Brig
Community Counseling Center
Physical Fitness Center
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

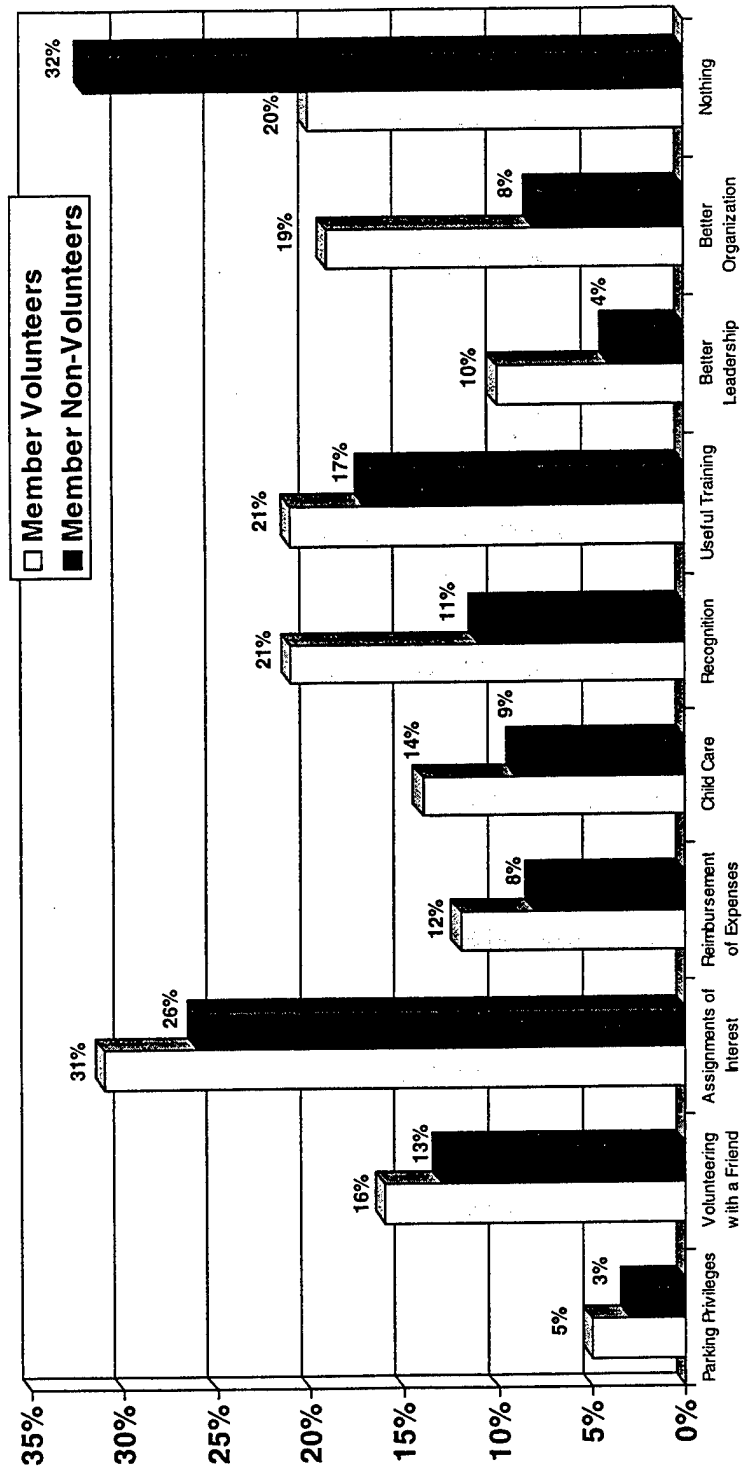
Source: Department of Defense. Report to Congress on Increased Authority to Accept Voluntary Services Pilot Program, 1996.

Appendix C

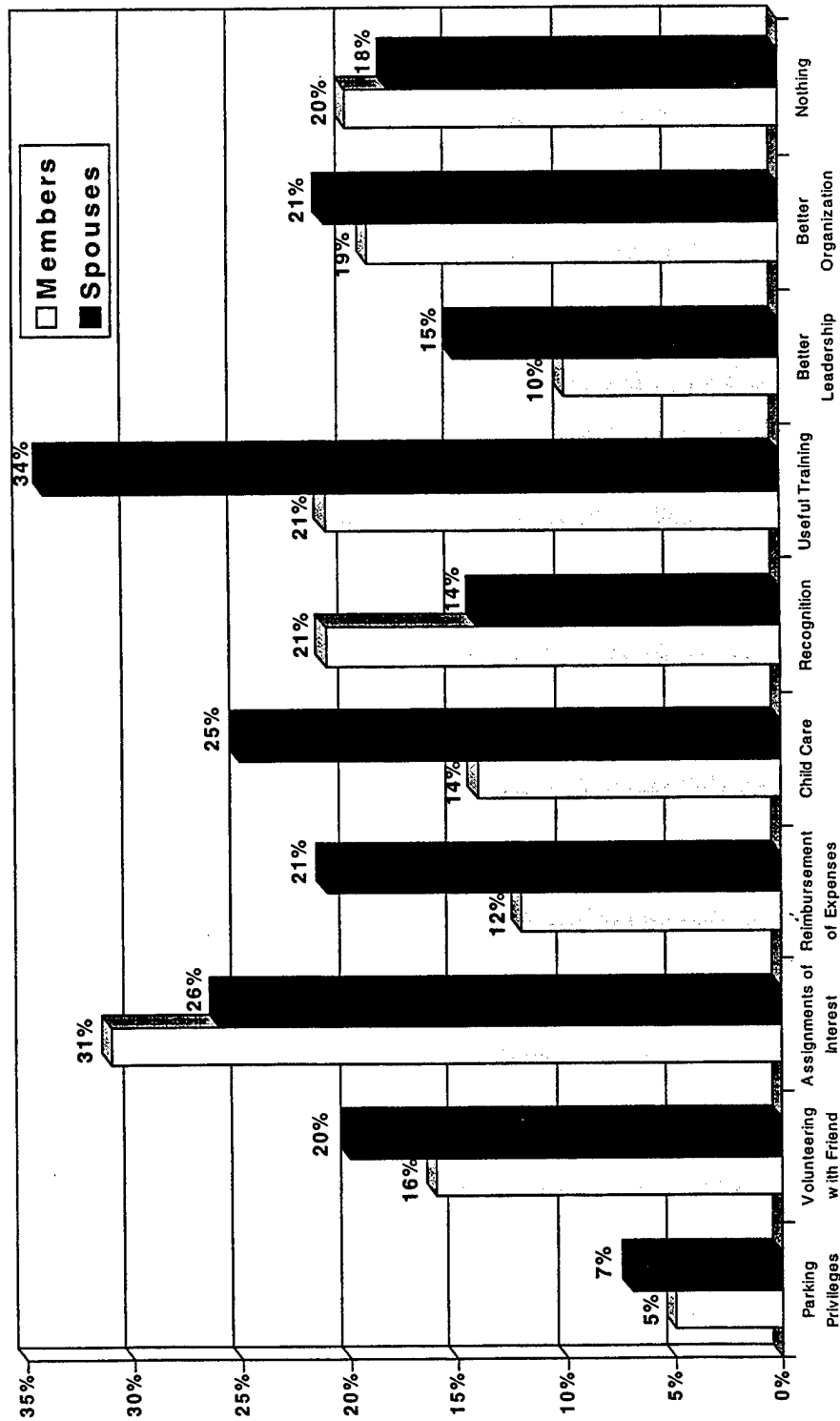
Factors that Would Increase Spouse Volunteerism



Factors that Would Increase Service Member Volunteerism



Factors that Would Increase Volunteerism Members and Spouses



REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

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13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words): This paper on volunteerism among military families has a specific focus on military spouses. Spouses of military personnel have traditionally provided volunteer services to the military community. Voluntary activity can provide military spouses with satisfying experiences and often can enhance a spouse's employment skills. In addition, in geographic areas where employment is not readily available, voluntary positions can offer valuable alternatives to paid employment. This paper provides recommendations for promoting volunteerism among this population. The report offers an examination of the extent of voluntary activity in domestic and overseas military bases factors that promote volunteerism and, factors that serve as obstacles to volunteerism. This analysis is based on the results from the 1992 Department of Defense Survey of Officers and Enlisted Personnel and their Spouses. The feasibility of providing or enhancing those services/attributes identified as fostering volunteerism and the elimination of barriers to volunteerism are also examined. While this paper looks at volunteerism within a particular population, military families, many of the findings of this research are generalizable to the population at large. As such, this study furthers our understanding of factors that foster volunteerism and provides practical methods nonprofit organizations can employ to recruit and retain their volunteer staff.				
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